



DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LT. GOVERNOR

KEVIN M. BURKE
SECRETARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Department of Fire Services

P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road

Stow, Massachusetts 01775

(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121



STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THOMAS P. LEONARD
DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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Contact:

Jennifer Mieth, (978) 567-3381

Arrest Made in Taunton Bakery Fire

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan, Taunton Fire Chief Leman W. Padelford and Taunton Police Chief Raymond O'Berg announced that a 43-year old Taunton man was arrested last night for setting fire to Art's International Bakery on August 12, 2008. Manuel M. Arruda is charged with burning of a building, breaking and entering in the nighttime and larceny over \$250. Investigators believe that Mr. Arruda broke into the building, stole money and then lit the fire to cover his crime.

The fire at 392 Washington Street, Taunton destroyed the building and put more than 15 people out of work. Coan said, "Arson is not a victimless crime. In this case it affected the owners of the business and building, employees, the bakery's customers, and everyone who lives in the neighborhood."

Chief Padelford said, "Arson fires put firefighters at a higher risk of injury because they often get a head start on us before they are discovered. We are fortunate no firefighters were injured at this fire."

The Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) reported there were 344 arsons in structures in Massachusetts during 2007, which caused 28 fire service injuries, 21 civilian injuries, seven deaths and more than \$14 million in property damage.

The fire was jointly investigated by fire investigators from the Taunton Fire Department, detectives from the Taunton Police Department, state police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The case will be prosecuted by the Bristol District Attorney's Office.